

1 **CLAIMS**

2       1.     A method comprising:  
3       storing a computer application program on one or more computer-readable  
4       media;  
5       storing a first version of a shared component in the one or more computer-  
6       readable media for execution on a computer system that stores at least a second  
7       version of the shared component; and  
8       establishing a logical relationship between the computer application  
9       program and the first version of the shared component so that the application uses  
10      the first version of the shared component when the application is executed on the  
11      computer system.

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13       2.     The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the establishing a logical  
14      relationship between the computer application program and the first version of the  
15      shared component includes configuring a logical directory data structure that has  
16      multiple logical directories so that the computer application program and the first  
17      version of the shared component are referenced within a first logical directory, and  
18      wherein the second version of the shared component is referenced within a second  
19      logical directory.



1           6.     The method as recited in claim 5, further comprising searching for the  
2 local file when the shared component is called and, if the local file is not found,  
3 utilizing a global version of the shared component.  
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5           7.     The method as recited in claim 5, wherein the local file is an empty  
6 file.  
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8           8.     One or more computer-readable media containing computer-  
9 executable instructions that, when executed on a computer, perform the method  
10 recited in claim 5.  
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12           9.     A computer readable medium containing computer-executable  
13 instructions that, when executed on a computer, perform the following:

14                 storing a computer application program in a computer system; and

15                 storing a first version of a shared component in the computer system for  
16 execution on the computer system, the computer system storing at least a second  
17 version of the shared component.  
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10. The computer readable medium as recited in claim 9, wherein the computer application program is stored on a hard disk drive of the computer system, the hard drive having discrete memory partitions, and wherein the computer-executable instructions further perform:

storing the computer application program and the first version of the shared component within a first memory partition; and

storing the second version of the shared component in a second memory partition.

11. The computer readable medium as recited in claim 9, the computer-executing instructions further performing the step of storing a file on the computer system that indicates the presence of the first version of the shared component.

12. The computer readable medium as recited in claim 9, wherein the shared component stored by the computer-executable instructions is a component object model (COM) component.

**13.** The computer readable medium as recited in claim 9, wherein the shared component stored by the computer-executable instructions is a dynamic-link library (DLL) component.

14. A computer system, comprising:  
memory divided into a plurality of discrete partitions;  
a first application program stored in a first memory partition;  
a first version of a shared component stored in a second memory partition,  
the first version of the shared component useable by at least a second application  
program;  
a second version of the shared component stored in the first memory  
partition;  
an indicator that, when present, indicates the existence of the second  
version of the shared component; and  
wherein the first application utilizes the second version of the shared  
component if the indicator is present.

15. A computer system as recited in claim 14, wherein the indicator includes a file having a name conforming to a pre-defined type.

16. A computer system as recited in claim 15, wherein the file is an empty file.

17. A computer system as recited in claim 14, wherein the indicator is stored in the first memory partition.

18. A computer system as recited in claim 14, wherein the memory includes a hard disk drive, and wherein the memory partitions are directories.

19. A computer system as recited in claim 14, wherein the first application utilizes the first version of the shared component if the indicator is not present.

**20.** The computer system as recited in claim 14, wherein the shared component is a component object model (COM) component.

**21.** The computer system as recited in claim 14, wherein the shared component is a dynamic-link library (DLL) component.

**22.** A directory tree data structure having multiple directories stored on one or more computer-readable media, comprising:

a first directory that contains a pointer to a first version of a shared component useable by a plurality of computer programs;

a second directory that contains a pointer to an application program and a pointer to a second version of the shared component; and

wherein the application program utilizes the second version of the shared component when the application program calls the shared component.

